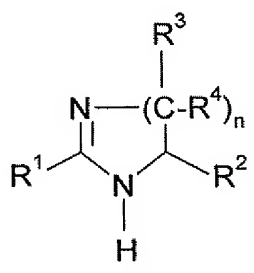


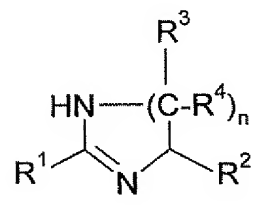
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Withdrawn) A method for inhibiting the release of ceramides, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute.
2. (Withdrawn) A method for the prophylaxis and protection of human skin against premature skin aging, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute.
3. (Currently Amended) A method for the prophylaxis or ~~and~~ protection of human skin against wrinkling, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute, which is of formula Ia or Ib



Ia



Ib

or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof,

R<sup>1</sup> is H or alkyl,

R<sup>2</sup> is H, COOH, COO-alkyl or CO-NH-R<sup>5</sup>,

R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> are each, independently of one another, H or OH,

n is 1, 2 or 3,

alkyl is an alkyl radical having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and

R<sup>5</sup> is H, alkyl, an amino acid residue, a dipeptide radical or a tripeptide

radical.

4. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the release of ceramides is induced by free radicals or UV light.
5. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein inhibiting the release of ceramides prevents the expression of matrix metalloproteinases.
6. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein increased degradation of collagen fibers of the skin is avoided.
7. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein inhibiting of the release of ceramides prevents the expression of pro-inflammatory proteins.
8. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 7, wherein the pro-inflammatory protein is the ICAM-1 gene.
9. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein inhibiting the release of ceramides prevents the formation of reactive oxygen species.
10. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the release of ceramides is inhibited in people with photodermatoses.
11. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 10, wherein the photodermatoses is polymorphic photodermatosis, lupus erythematoses or light urticaria.
12. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 3 4, wherein the compatible solutes are solute of formula Ia or Ib is in the form of a cosmetic, dermatological or pharmaceutical composition.
13. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the compatible solutes are of formula Ia or Ib



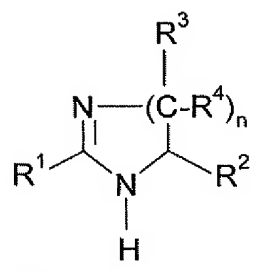
or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof,

$\text{R}^1$  is H or alkyl,  
 $\text{R}^2$  is H, COOH, COO-alkyl or CO-NH- $\text{R}^5$ ,  
 $\text{R}^3$  and  $\text{R}^4$  are each, independently of one another, H or OH,  
 $n$  is 1, 2 or 3,  
 alkyl is an alkyl radical having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and  
 $\text{R}^5$  is H, alkyl, an amino acid residue, a dipeptide radical or a tripeptide radical.

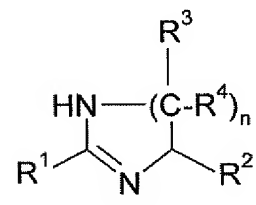
14. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method according to claim 3 43, wherein the compound of formula Ia or Ib is (S)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydro-2-methyl-4-pyrimidinecarboxylic acid or (S,S)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydro-5-hydroxy-2-methyl-4-pyrimidinecarboxylic acid.

15. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 3 4, wherein the proportion of compatible ~~solutes~~ solute of formula Ia or Ib in a composition administered is 0.001 to 50% by weight, based on the composition as a whole.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for the protection of the human skin against wrinkling, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute, which is of formula Ia or Ib



la



lb.

or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof.

R<sup>1</sup> is H or alkyl.

R<sup>2</sup> is H, COOH, COO-alkyl or CO-NH-R<sup>5</sup>.

R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> are each, independently of one another, H or OH,

n is 1, 2 or 3,

alkyl is an alkyl radical having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and

R<sup>5</sup> is H, alkyl, an amino acid residue, a dipeptide radical or a tripeptide radical.

17. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method for the protection of the human skin against premature skin ageing, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute.

18. (Withdrawn) A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of photodermatoses, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute.

19. (Withdrawn) A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of polymorphic photodermatosis, lupus erythematoses and/or light urticaria, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compatible solute.

20. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method according to claim 3  
~~13~~, wherein an isolated stereoisomeric form of a compound of formula Ia or Ib is  
administered.